United Nations S/2012/962

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 December 2012

Original: English

Letter dated 11 December 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a report of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Germany in September 2012 (see annex).

The report was prepared under my responsibility, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Peter **Wittig**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 11 December 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Germany (September 2012)

Introduction

During the month of September 2012, under the presidency of the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Ambassador Peter Wittig, the Council adopted four resolutions and one presidential statement, and issued nine press statements. The Council held a high-level meeting on peace and security in the Middle East, which was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Guido Westerwelle. It also held an open thematic debate on children and armed conflict.

Africa

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 18 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, briefed the Council in consultations of the whole on his visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda from 9 to 16 September. The visit aimed at preparing the high-level meeting of the Secretary-General on eastern Congo on 27 September 2012. Council members welcomed the engagement of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union to help resolve the crisis. They stressed the need for a political solution, the need to address the root causes of the conflict and the need for all external support for militias in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to end. Furthermore, Council members encouraged dialogue and confidence-building between Kinshasa and Kigali. In this context, they welcomed the launch of the enlarged Joint Verification Mechanism.

Liberia

On 6 September, the Security Council met in private with troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, Karin Landgren. The Special Representative described the proposed gradual drawdown of the UNMIL security footprint as a turning point for both the Mission and Liberia. Underlining the shared priority to maintain and preserve stability in Liberia, she stressed the need to ensure that transition in Liberia is carefully managed and adequately resourced. She called for utmost support from the police-contributing countries in order to fully strengthen the mentoring and advisory relationship of UNMIL with the Liberia National Police. With regard to the continued insecurity near the border with Côte d'Ivoire, she pointed out the Government's successful deployment of a joint task force, as well as the assistance in effective border management provided by UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI). Troop-contributing countries and police-contributing countries

stressed the importance of inter-mission cooperation, with some troop-contributing countries and police-contributing countries stating their interest in necessary support for the Liberia National Police.

On 11 September, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations of the whole on UNMIL. It was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Liberia Configuration, Ambassador Staffan Tillander (Sweden), and the Permanent Representative of Liberia, Ambassador Marjon Kamara. The Special Representative underlined that the improvement of the security situation in Liberia was not only a question of security sector reform, but was also one of enhancing reconciliation and implementing structural political changes. With regard to the security situation along the border with Côte d'Ivoire, UNMIL and UNOCI would continue to cooperate closely, while at the same time the cooperation between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire could be enhanced. The envisaged reconfiguration of UNMIL, through the reduction of 4,200 military personnel over the next three years, would allow for a gradual transfer of the security responsibility from UNMIL to the Liberian authorities. Council members expressed their agreement with the envisaged reconfiguration of UNMIL; some underlined the necessity to proceed with caution, keeping in mind the still fragile security situation along Liberia's border with Côte d'Ivoire. Council members underlined the necessity for the Liberian authorities to focus more strongly on national reconciliation, constitutional reform, decentralization and an inclusive national dialogue. They welcomed the close cooperation between UNMIL and UNOCI and called for enhanced regional cooperation to improve security.

On 17 September, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2066 (2012), renewing the mandate of UNMIL for a further 12 months until 30 September 2013. By this resolution, the Council decided to reduce the UNMIL military component by 1,990 personnel over the mandate period, subject to and consistent with conditions in the area of operations, and decided to increase the UNMIL police component by three formed police units as soon as possible, with the first unit deploying no later than January 2013. At the same time, UNMIL and UNOCI were encouraged to enhance their cooperation in order to assist stabilizing the border region between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

Sudan and South Sudan

On 6 September the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the Sudan and South Sudan. The Council was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan, Haile Menkerios. The Special Envoy referred to the situation on the ground, the implementation of Security Council resolution 2046 (2012) and the ongoing negotiations between the Sudan and South Sudan in Addis Ababa.

On 20 September, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on the Sudan and South Sudan. The Council was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General. The Special Envoy reported about the negotiations between the Sudan and South Sudan in Addis Ababa that had entered a crucial phase shortly before the arrival of the two Heads of State. He also reported on the situation along the border between the two countries and on the humanitarian crisis in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States of the Sudan.

On 20 September, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on Sudan sanctions. The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan and Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Ambassador Néstor Osorio, briefed the Council on the work of the sanctions Committee.

On 21 September, the Security Council issued a press statement on the Sudan and South Sudan welcoming the resumed negotiations under the auspices of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel and affirming that it was the responsibility of the two presidents to bridge the remaining gaps in the negotiations in accordance with the African Union road map and the decisions of the Security Council. The statement also referred to the humanitarian crisis in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States and urged direct talks between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/North.

On 28 September, the Security Council issued a press statement on the Sudan and South Sudan applauding the agreements reached by the Presidents of the two States in Addis Ababa the day before. The statement further underlined the critical importance of immediate and full implementation of the agreements and called on the parties to reach agreement with regard to the outstanding issues.

Somalia

On 18 September, the Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 2067 (2012) on Somalia, in which it welcomed the progress made in Somalia over the past 12 months, which had culminated in the election of the new President. The Council also expressed its determination to work closely with the new Somali institutions and emphasized the critical role of the new Somali authorities in achieving reconciliation, lasting peace and stability in the country. The Council also looked forward to the upcoming inter-agency review of the United Nations presence in Somalia and requested options and recommendations by the Secretary-General by 31 December 2012.

On 21 September, the Security Council issued a press statement on the terrorist attacks that had occurred in Mogadishu the day before. The statement reiterated the resolve of the Council to support Somalia in its efforts for peace and reconciliation.

Sierra Leone

On 11 September, the Security Council held a briefing and consultations of the whole on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL). The Executive Representative of the Secretary-General to Sierra Leone and Head of UNIPSIL, Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen, the Chairperson of the Sierra Leone country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski and the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations, Ambassador Shekou Touray, briefed the Council on the developments in the country ahead of the upcoming presidential, parliamentary and local elections to be held on 17 November. Council members underlined the importance of peaceful, fair and free elections as a further step in peace consolidation and expressed their expectation that all stakeholders adhere to their commitments under the declaration of 18 May 2012. The Council also considered the post-election period and noted that

root causes of conflict in Sierra Leone, as well as youth unemployment and management of natural resources, needed further attention.

With regard to UNIPSIL, Council members agreed to extend the current mandate for a period of six months until 31 March 2013, with the objective of reviewing the mandate in early 2013 and after the deployment of a technical assessment mission, which should make recommendations regarding the further planning of the anticipated transition of UNIPSIL to a conventional United Nations country team.

On 12 September, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2065 (2012), renewing the mandate of UNIPSIL for six months and requesting the Secretary-General to provide a report containing detailed proposals and a recommended timeline for the transition, drawdown and exit strategy of UNIPSIL no later than 15 February 2013.

Libya

On 12 September, the Security Council heard a briefing by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), followed by consultations of the whole. The Council had before it the report of the Secretary-General on UNSMIL issued on 30 August 2012 (S/2012/675). Mr. Feltman condemned, in the strongest terms, the 11 September attack on the United States diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, in which four United States diplomatic personnel were killed. The briefing focused on political and security developments in Libya and the activities of UNSMIL since 1 March 2012, including steps taken by UNSMIL to ensure that the Mission would continue to support the specific needs of Libya following the election of the new government. During consultations, the members of the Security Council welcomed the report of the Secretary-General and the appointment of Tarek Mitri as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of UNSMIL. Members of the Council shared the assessment by the Secretary-General that the elections on 7 July were a significant step forward in the democratic transition of Libya. They welcomed further steps taken in the transition process, including the election of the General National Congress and its President, Mr. Al-Magariaf. Council members stressed the importance of the constitutional development process, including the need to address regional grievances and to guarantee and protect human rights. Council members largely agreed with the assessment of the Secretary-General that serious political and security challenges remained.

The Council also underlined the need for comprehensive security sector reform, including improved border security, to address arms proliferation. Council members also underlined that improvements in the human rights situation were required, particularly related to the situation of detainees, migrant workers and third-party nationals. Members of the Council welcomed the role played by UNSMIL in supporting the Libyan authorities and the Libyan people in the transition process. Council members noted the assessment made by the Secretary-General that the current mandate provided UNSMIL with the scope and breadth it required in order to support the needs of the future Government. In consultations, Council members unanimously condemned the attack on United States diplomatic personnel. A press statement was adopted in which the members of the Security Council condemned in

the strongest terms the attack on the United States of America diplomatic mission and personnel in Benghazi, Libya.

Guinea-Bissau

On 18 September, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on Guinea-Bissau. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed on the restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012). Council members shared concerns about the continuing political stalemate in Guinea-Bissau, and reiterated their call for enhanced dialogue and coordination between the different stakeholders. Furthermore, Council members considered the possibility of a road map for the transition process.

Peace and security in Africa (Sahel region)

On 17 September, the Security Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on peace and security and Africa focusing on the situation in the Sahel, including Mali. On the situation in Mali, the Council also heard a briefing by the Economic Community of African States (ECOWAS), represented by the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire, to the United Nations, Youssoufou Bamba.

The Council members welcomed the progress made in developing a United Nations integrated regional strategy for the Sahel, pursuant to resolution 2056 (2012). Council members took note of the United Nations ongoing plans to finalize the United Nations Sahel strategy through a consultative process with States of the Sahel, relevant regional and other organizations, and international partners. They looked forward to the finalization of a strategic document and proposals of adequate mechanisms for a coordinated implementation of the integrated United Nations Sahel strategy.

On 21 September, the Security Council issued a press statement calling on the Malian transitional authorities to continue efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and restore constitutional order through the holding of elections by the end of the transition. The members of the Council reiterated their concern about the security and humanitarian situation in the north of Mali and the presence of terrorist elements, including Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and affiliated groups. The Council took note of the request of the interim Malian Government for assistance to ECOWAS and expressed its readiness to consider a feasible and actionable proposal from ECOWAS addressing the request.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 20 September, the Security Council held a debate on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The Council had before it a report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implication for international peace and security (A/67/354-S/2012/703). The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Zalmai Rassoul, participated in the debate. The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA, Ján Kubiš.

The Special Representative welcomed the Kabul and Tokyo Conferences, where the Government of Afghanistan and the international community had reiterated their long-term mutual commitments and had commended the progress in the framework of the Istanbul process. The Special Representative welcomed the continued momentum of this initiative and the gradual start of the activities of the relevant working groups on confidence-building measures. He welcomed the emerging interest of regional organizations, notably of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, in engaging with Afghanistan and UNAMA in a structured dialogue for the benefit of Afghanistan and the region.

The Special Representative said that security transition was on track with the ongoing implementation of the first three tranches of transition. The number of civilian casualties had decreased in the first eight months of 2012 as compared to the previous year. However, in August there was the second highest number of civilian casualties since the beginning of UNAMA's recording of casualties.

According to the Special Representative, these trends thus failed to reflect improvements in the institutional structures required for long-term stability and to generate a change in the security perception of the Afghan population.

Concerning the future work of UNAMA, the Special Representative stressed that pending budget cuts might have an adverse impact on the work of UNAMA. In order to maintain its effectiveness in implementing its core mandate, UNAMA was conducting a programme criticality exercise. He assured the Security Council that providing good offices, the preparation of presidential elections in 2014, reconciliation and improvements in the human rights situation, and donor coordination were continuing priorities for UNAMA.

Latin America

Haiti

On 12 September 2012, the Security Council held a private meeting with troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Mariano Fernández, briefed the Council and troop- and police-contributing countries on the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/678), including the security situation in the country and the activities of MINUSTAH.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 17 September 2012, the Security Council heard a briefing by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Robert Serry, on the situation in the Middle East, followed by consultations of the whole. The Special Coordinator said that the lack of progress on the political track and ongoing conflict and occupation put at risk the very viability of the two-State solution. He highlighted the budget deficit of the Palestinian Authority as an issue of immediate concern, especially in the light of recent protests in the West Bank. While Israel had advanced some tax transfers in order to enable the Authority to pay salaries, the

implementation of donor commitments and additional contributions were urgently needed. The lack of a political perspective compounded the frustration felt among the Palestinian population, which put at risk the progress achieved in building a functional State. The Special Coordinator also reported a spike in violence, including so-called "price-tag activities", by extremist settlers. He stressed the importance of Palestinian access to and development in Area C of the West Bank for the viability of a future Palestinian State. Council members shared the concern about the financial situation of the Palestinian Authority and called for further support, especially of Arab donors. They further noted a worrying increase in settler violence in the West Bank. Some Council members called for an early meeting of the Middle East Quartet principals. Many Council members condemned as illegal settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory. Council members reiterated their condemnation of the attacks on diplomatic personnel and premises, following the publication of a defamatory video.

On 26 September 2012, the Security Council held a high-level debate on peace and security in the Middle East. The debate was presided over by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany and was also attended by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, China, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Morocco, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Togo, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Council heard briefings by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, Nabil Elaraby.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations highlighted the transformations in the Arab world, which had given the League of Arab States a new sense of purpose. He noted that both the United Nations and the League of Arab States worked to help ensure the transparency of landmark elections in Tunisia and Libya. On the Syrian Arab Republic, the League of Arab States had contributed to the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), and had co-appointed both the former Joint Special Envoy on the Syrian crisis, Kofi Annan, and the Joint Special Representative for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi. The United Nations Secretary-General cited four areas that merited special attention: improving the exchange of information, including through dialogue between the secretariats of the two bodies; the possible placement of the Office of the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria in Cairo; giving priority to conflict prevention; and exploring new areas for collaboration such as sustainable energy.

The Secretary General of the Arab League said that a fundamental pillar for international peace and security is the effectiveness and credibility of the Security Council, as well as the full implementation of its resolutions. With regard to both the Palestinian question and the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, he called for action by the Council that would be binding on the parties. He further proposed that the cooperation agreement signed in 1989 between the League of Arab States and the United Nations be updated, and that the status of regular meetings between the organizations be raised, as well as closer cooperation on humanitarian assistance.

Council members commended the active role of the League of Arab States as a crucial partner of the United Nations in the region. They highlighted the worsening situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the urgent need for renewed efforts by the Council to address it. Some Council members called for the implementation of the

Geneva communiqué. Several Council members said that, while the transformations in the Arab world deserved support, close attention remained necessary to the situation of human rights, especially of women and minorities. Council members expressed different views on the desirability of legal restrictions on defamatory remarks on religions.

The Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2012/20) recognizing and further encouraging efforts by the League of Arab States towards promoting international responses to the transformations in the region, welcoming its intensifying cooperation with the United Nations, supporting the efforts of the Joint Special Representative for Syria and calling for strengthened cooperation between both organizations across a broad agenda. The statement reiterated the commitment of the Council to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. It recalled the press statements of the Council of 12 and 14 September regarding recent attacks on diplomatic personnel and premises, and reaffirmed that such acts are unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed. It also stressed the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity throughout the world.

On 24 September, during consultations of the whole, the Security Council heard the first formal briefing by the Joint Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the League of Arab States for Syria, since his appointment on 17 August 2012. These consultations were chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany. Joint Special Representative Brahimi informed the Council on the preparations undertaken for the work of the United Nations liaison office in Damascus and on the meetings he had held with Government and civil society representatives in Damascus, Cairo, Jordan and Paris. He updated the Council on the security and humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and its impact on neighbouring States, as well as on his efforts to support the Syrian people in entering a political transition process. The Joint Special Representative called on the Council to provide him with collective, united and sustained support. The members of the Security Council welcomed the opportunity to discuss the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic with the Joint Special Representative following his visit to the region. They expressed their grave concern about the ongoing violence in the Syrian Arab Republic and its humanitarian impact, and the potential risks for regional peace and stability. The members of the Council reaffirmed their full support for the Joint Special Representative and his efforts to bring about a ceasefire and to support a political transition in the Syrian Arab Republic that would meet the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people.

Yemen

The Security Council continued to closely follow the transition process in Yemen. On 13 September, the Security Council adopted a press statement condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attack that occurred in Sana'a on 11 September, causing numerous deaths and injuries.

On 18 September, the Security Council held consultations of the whole, during which the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Jamal Benomar, reported on the recent political and security developments, and the Deputy Director of the Coordination and Response Division of the Office of the Coordinator of

Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, Philippe Lazzarini, reported on the humanitarian situation. The members of the Council agreed that the comprehensive and inclusive national dialogue should begin without delay, in order to lay the foundation for a stable and unified Yemen. They also expressed their support for the steps taken by President Hadi in reforming and restructuring the security sector. Council members shared the concern raised by Mr. Benomar regarding ongoing attempts to undermine the transition process and, recalling Security Council resolution 2051 (2012), they stressed the need for the Council to continue to closely follow the situation in Yemen. The members of the Council expressed their concern about the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen and agreed that it required an urgent response.

On 28 September, the Security Council adopted a press statement welcoming the Friends of Yemen ministerial meeting of 27 September 2012, as well as the statement of its co-Chairs. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Yemen. The members of the Council reiterated their support for Yemen in its efforts to reach key milestones in the implementation plan and called upon all parties to continue to honour the timetable set out in the transition agreement. The Council re-emphasized the importance of conducting a fully inclusive, participatory, transparent and meaningful national dialogue conference, including with youth and women's groups. They welcomed the continued engagement of the good offices of the Secretary-General and of his Special Adviser. The members of the Council urged all the parties in Yemen to reject acts of violence to achieve political goals, to refrain from provocations and to abide by resolutions 2014 (2011) and 2051 (2012). They expressed increasing concern about efforts to undermine the national unity Government as it endeavoured to implement the political transition agreement, and reiterated their readiness to consider further measures, including under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, if such actions continued. They repeated their call that all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses must be held accountable. The Council welcomed the more than $7 billion pledged at the Riyadh donor conference, as well as the Friends of Yemen meeting and the agreement of the Government of Yemen to a mutual accountability framework setting out commitments of the Government and donors to ensure that these additional resources deliver support to the people of Yemen. The members of the Council reiterated their grave concern at the humanitarian situation in Yemen and that all parties should ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access.

Thematic and general issues

On 11 September, the Security Council adopted a press statement condemning in the strongest terms the wave of terrorist attacks across Iraq on 8 and 9 September that had caused numerous deaths and injuries and damage to the French honorary consulate premises in Nasiriyah.

On 12 September, the Security Council adopted a press statement on attacks against United States diplomatic personnel, condemning in the strongest terms the attack on the United States diplomatic mission and personnel in Benghazi, Libya, on 11 September, and expressing their deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the victims of this heinous act and to their families. The Council also condemned in the strongest terms the attack on the United States Embassy in Cairo, on 11 September.

The members of the Council underlined the need to bring the perpetrators of these acts to justice, and reaffirmed that such acts are unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed. The Council recalled the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, and the relevant obligations of host Governments to take all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic and consular premises and personnel.

On 14 September, the Security Council adopted a press statement on attacks against diplomatic premises, condemning in the strongest terms the series of violent attacks against embassies and consular premises of Member States in multiple locations on 13 and 14 September. The Council expressed its deep concern at these attacks, recalling that the very nature of diplomatic premises is peaceful and that diplomats have among their core functions the promotion of better understanding across countries and cultures. The members of the Council reaffirmed that such acts are unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed. Recalling the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic and consular premises, and the obligations of host Governments, the Council called on all authorities to protect diplomatic and consular property and personnel, and to respect fully their international obligations in this regard.

Non-proliferation (Islamic Republic of Iran)

On 20 September, the Security Council met for a briefing on Iran sanctions. The Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) and Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, Ambassador Néstor Osorio, delivered his 90-day report on the work of the Committee to the Security Council covering the period from 12 June to 12 September. In his report, the Chair noted, inter alia, that the Committee had received several communications relating to the implementation of relevant Security Council measures, and that the Committee, among others, was seeking full cooperation from Member States in gathering information about an incident involving the inspection and seizure of three shipping containers of arms and arms-related materiel on board the *M/V Victoria*.

Following the briefing, Council members voiced strong support for the work of the Committee and the Panel of Experts. Some members expressed deep concern about the Islamic Republic of Iran's non-compliance with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Security Council resolutions, as well as the Islamic Republic of Iran's ballistic missile programme and supply of weaponry to the Syrian Arab Republic, and urged the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1737 (2006) to take swift action and allow for the consistent implementation of sanctions. Other Council members called upon the Committee to strictly adhere to its mandate, advocating a balanced approach between sanctions and negotiations. With regard to the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear issue, Council members expressed their hope for a positive and peaceful solution through dialogue, welcoming the latest IAEA resolution and negotiations by the E3+3 group.

Rule of law

On 24 September, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, in his capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of September 2012, addressed the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the national and

international levels. In his statement, he highlighted the fact that several presidential statements had recognized the crucial relevance of the rule of law across the full spectrum of the Council's agenda, and pointed to those thematic and country-specific resolutions adopted by the Council since 2003 that relate to the rule of law in both its international and national dimensions.

Briefing by the Department of Political Affairs

On 17 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs provided a horizon-scanning briefing to the Security Council during consultations of the whole, covering United Nations electoral assistance to Member States. The briefing focused on principles guiding electoral assistance, lessons learned from previous assistance missions and trends regarding violence in the context of elections.

Children and armed conflict

On 19 September, the Security Council held an open debate on children and armed conflict with a special focus on accountability for perpetrators of violations and abuses against children in armed conflict. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, submitted the yearly report of the Secretary-General (A/66/782-S/2012/261) and briefed the Council on her work, as did the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund, Anthony Lake. The Council was also addressed by the President of the International Center for Transitional Justice, David Tolbert, on how to better achieve accountability for crimes against children in armed conflict.

Council members stressed their broad support for the United Nations children and armed conflict agenda and the important role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Some Council members expressed concern about the fact that the report of the Secretary-General included certain situations that were not on the Council's agenda.

The Council adopted resolution 2068 (2012), with 11 votes in favour and 4 abstentions, which reiterated the readiness of the Council to take all measures necessary to protect children in armed conflict.